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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001514

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SE (SILVERMAN, GOELLNER-SWEET), DRL/IL  
(WHITE) LONDON FOR GOLDRICH, PARIS FOR O'FRIEL, LABOR FOR  
BRUMFIELD

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: "NEIGHBORS" DISAPPROVE OF TURKISH CONDUCT IN  
FOREIGN RELATIONS

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch; reasons 1.5 (b)(d).

1. (C) Summary: Comments elicited during conversations with mission representatives of neighboring countries regarding Turkey's conduct of foreign affairs suggest little approval or admiration exists for Turkish diplomatic maneuvers. End summary.

2. (C) Political officer (PO), who has the Middle East and labor portfolios, initiated a series of courtesy visits to representatives of neighboring missions and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Throughout all of PO's meetings with MFA staff as well as other missions, Turks and Arabs both affirmed they had mutually good and cooperative relations with each other. In recent weeks, MFA contacts have alleged that they have been primarily preoccupied with Iraq-related issues. At the same time, contacts in Middle Eastern embassies say that they have had no conversations with the MFA regarding Iraq.

3 (C) Surprisingly, the Saudi Embassy provided PO with the first peek behind the "cordial curtain" into what the relationship between Arabs and Turks might really be. The Saudi political counselor (strictly protect) described Turks as "mukh nashif" an Arabic term meaning "dry brain" to explain the Turks' legendary stubbornness in business transactions.

4. (C) The Israeli DCM (strictly protect) confided that when "'things' are good it is easy and when bad harder to work with Turkey." The DCM compares the question of Turkish admission to the EU with getting admitted to Yale or Cambridge: wanting is not enough; an applicant must be able to offer "something special."

5 (C) The Moroccan DCM (strictly protect), who served in Washington for eight years, was exasperated after enduring four rounds of negotiations for what should be a mutually beneficial trade agreement between the Turkey and Morocco. He fumed, "They act as if they are still Ottomans!"

6. (C) The Embassy of Pakistan DCM (strictly protect) recently served in Vienna and described the Turks as "warlike."

7. (C) The Embassy of India Second Secretary (strictly protect) affirmed India's interest in assisting with Afghan reconstruction. The secretary noted that historically India was not warlike, which made it possible for aggressive nations such as Turkey to invade it.

8. (C) Finally, almost simultaneous conversations with members of the Afghan mission and the European Union's labor officer elicited virtually the same response when asked to describe their missions' relations with the Turks: Both diplomats sighed, rolled their eyes, shook their heads from side to side and waved their right hands, as to describe a crooked river.

9. (C) Comment: Strongly held historic prejudices, reinforced by Turkey's current negotiations with the US and others, suggest that distaste for Turkish-style diplomacy still persists. End comment.  
PEARSON